

LEICESTER ROWING CLUB

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 1st NOVEMBER 2018 AT THE CLUBHOUSE, UPPERTON ROAD, LEICESTER

Present: Liz, Rob, Anne, Nicola, Steve Henry, Malcolm Neal, Tim Walton, Kim Clark, Graham Clark, Matt Connolly, Jean McNeil, Ron Hanson, Sally Horrocks, Angela Holohan, Sarah Peck, Caroline Peck, Graham Wright, Paul McGrillis, Emma McGrillis, Ben Pickering, Hazel Ward, Alex Wellings, Freya Talbot, Sue Shaw, Jose Mills, Shelisha Kincarr, Howard Marsh, Blythe Lyons, Andrew Lyons

1. PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Presented by Liz Pulford

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Tony Green, Mike Watson, Paul Shaw, Jonny Walton, John Wilson, Simon Whittaker, Laraine Porter, Joe Holohan

MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 1st November 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

Proposed by Graham Clark and Seconded by Alex Wellings.

3. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(i) CAPTAIN'S REPORT

Presented by Rob Fox

Introduction

As I suspect Liz might have mentioned this isn't my first year doing this. Over the years I've learnt to try and not repeat what Liz has said and not go on too much, often without much success. If Liz has covered some results in detail, then I won't repeat them but I will reference that they are included in my report. In my role as Captain I would like to thank the club committee for all their head work this past year. I have been very fortunate in my time as captain to have had very capable people on the club committee working hard for everyone in many different ways. I think it's worth noting that Liz, Howard and Sally have been on the club committee for the whole 9 years of my captaincy and I thank them for all the support they have given me. This past year I have to single out Nicola Henry who has been the club treasurer, membership secretary and regatta secretary whilst also getting involved with organising the front gate contract with the Riverside and helping me out behind the scenes running the bar. Thank you Nicola

Results

The club posted an impressive 75 wins this past season an increase of 7 from last year some of which at a very high level.

Notable Results

- Lauren Henry – wins at GB Junior Trials, Henley Long Distance Sculls, GB small boats, Henley Womens, Silver medals at National Schools and Munich International regatta and representing the club in the World Junior Championship in Japan

- Howard Marsh – Selected as a GB coach.
- Ben, Cillian, Matt and Tom – wins at Nottingham, Fours Head, Boston, Leicester, Metropolitan
- Ben Pickering – Pairs Head, World Masters
- Dave Smith – fastest quad at the 8s Head

Women's Squad

Last year I referred to Alex being in phase 1 of his plan for the women's squad and looking forward to seeing how phase 2 worked out. The results this past year suggest his plan is working with multiple wins, a good performance at Henley qualifiers and a growing squad including mixing up with junior crews. Alex I'm pleased to see you are standing again and seeing where your enthusiasm can take the squad next year.

Men's Squad

In last years report I recorded that Graham Clark needed a bit of arm twisting to take on the men's captains role which has proved to be a difficult role due to lack of experienced applicants and retaining those that do join. As the year progressed Graham increased his role with coaching the juniors with Hazel taking on the men's squad having worked hard to grow it up through her learn to row sessions. Hazel will officially be men's captain next year and I know she has big plans for growing the squad and getting them out racing next year.

Junior Squad

It's often surprised me when looking back just a year what changes can be made in the club. Last year was Graham Wright's first year in the role as junior coordinator and all the talk was of building up the squad and getting them out racing again. Following a very successful junior rowing week organised by Oli and Joanne Talbot and new applicants being invited into the squad it's grown to nearly 30 some of which have already posted several wins this past year. We all look forward to seeing the juniors out racing and seeing what they can achieve next year.

Recreational Squad

It seems that every time I ask how it's going in the recreational squad there are tales of river tours, rows to the pub, getting stuck in locks and even a Brexit Tour over in Ireland. The rec squad has continued to boost their numbers by recruiting junior parents and experienced rowers returning to rowing, a successful policy which has left them largely full this past year. This growth in numbers has led to equipment issues especially around blades which are in short supply in the Saturday sessions, a recurring issue we haven't managed to resolve for a while now.

Performance Squad

As in previous years, a large proportion of club wins have been from Howard Marsh's Performance Squad showing again those that put in the hours and follow his training plans get results. We all benefit at the club from the time and effort Howards puts into coaching and it's very much appreciated by everyone at the club.

Equipment

- Concept mk4 rowing machine

Novices\Learn to Row course

Hazel Ward in her role as novice coordinator has worked hard this past year bringing new members into the club all alongside her own training and running the men's squad. It's a role I know well having done it myself and it's tough putting in your time and seeing new members disappear. Despite these challenges Hazel has recruited and kept a group of new men which should be out racing next year. Given the capacity of club coaches and the full nature of some of the squads the current plan is to put a hold on novices joining until the Tokyo Olympics where we will have a big push and full learn to row course involving the whole club to make the most of the interest that the Olympics brings.

Leicester Regatta

Sunday 28th April saw us hold another successful Leicester regatta with 198 crews from 22 different clubs in 139 different races. The decision to keep the number of entrants at 200 led to a slightly smaller but much more manageable event. Over 50 club members helped out on the day making it another regatta for the club to be proud of. A special mention must go to Tim who in his role as Race Committee Chairman dealt with a very difficult situation with calm professionalism a credit to himself and the umpires that work so hard to support us all when out racing.

University Business

Since DMU moved out of our boathouse we have attempted to work with them and Leicester University to form a rowing forum of all 3 clubs to work on safety and towards improving rowing in Leicester. The now ex DMU coach held this up at every junction, with him moving on to pastures new I'm pleased to say we have now had the first meeting of this forum with all 3 clubs attending. Plans are afoot to agree upon common safety and rowing etiquette for all 3 clubs. A thank you to Anne for keeping up the relationships with the university clubs despite numerous challenges.

Summary

It's difficult to sum up my time as captain, as I said at the dinner it's a role over the years that's driven me mad but also kept me sane. However as I won't get a chance to do this again I'm going to take the chance to blow my own trumpet and say what I'm proud of these past 9 years. It's goes without saying that almost everything I achieved was by working with far far too many club members to list here.

When I took over as captain it was clear the priority was new senior members, so I started running learn to row courses which looking at my records were attended by over 250 people. As part of this drive for new members I helped sign up the club for the Explore Rowing programme which resulted in all the ER boats and was the starting point for the recreational squad we have today. I even had my own Cilla moment when 2 members met on a learn to row course and ended up getting married. Off the water I also look back on some good admin like formalising the water timetable to help the squads grow and the RoFo meetings so club coaches can talk just about rowing and not if the toilets are flushing which is 50% of most committee meetings. Getting the honours board sorted, hanging the blades around the bar and most of the photos on the wall I also see as an achievement to make this place look like a proper rowing club. I'm also particularly proud of working with British Rowing to acquire the equipment and experience to welcome the first adaptive rower into Leicester Rowing Club. I assume I also did some rowing at some point.

The next club captain applied to join the club in May 2012 and was on one of my learn to row courses a few months later. Who knows maybe in 2028 he will be recounting his last 9 years as club captain, if nothing else I wonder if he will award himself the oarsman of the year award at the next club dinner. I'm confident that whatever happens Ben will get the same support and help in the role as I have been lucky enough to receive and we can all continue to work to push Leicester Rowing Club onto greater and greater things in the future.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Ben Pickering and seconded by Hazel Ward and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

Presentation to Rob of the blade in recognition of the contribution to the Club over 9 years. Applauded by all!

(ii) SECRETARY'S REPORT Presented by Anne Hock

There has been more pressure than ever on the Riverside this year, and we are suffering from the high temperatures and now high waters and the damage that is doing to the riverside, the basin and our landing stages. We managed some litter picking days over last winter, and also cutting back some of the

overgrowth towards the weir during the year, and thank the EA and Council for their support. There seems to be less and less done on the riverside by the agencies, and Graham Clark and I met the Council yesterday to start planning for the work to be done over the next few winter months, should the water levels and weather allow it. There will be a big day on cutting back the overgrowth on 7th December starting from 9.30am, so please make sure you come in to give vital help!

The Christmas Club races were held for the first time in ages last December, and was a thoroughly enjoyable event for all concerned. Thanks go to so many people – Liz for organising the racing, Sally for the ergo challenge, Joanne for co-ordinating the food and all the members who came along to take part. Let's hope we can repeat it this year.

The Annual Dinner, this time held at the Belmont, was again a very enjoyable event with over 70 members, friends and partners there. Over £300 was made on the raffle so hopefully it has also made a good contribution to finances. Thanks to Sue Porter, Caroline Haracz and Kim Clark for all their hard work to make the evening such a success.

In October we held a refresher workshop on the Defibrillator which was attended by over 30 people, including a couple from the West End Runners. The Joe Humphries Memorial Trust continue to give us great support, providing the session leaders and all the kit for us to learn what to do. In addition it is worth mentioning their support for juniors in sport, which in this last year included grants to Oliver Talbot towards his coaching qualification, and Lauren Henry towards some blades. The JHMT continue to ask me to encourage applications from our talented juniors.

BR were trying out asking club members to volunteer for national events at the National Water Sports Centre. As a result, a team went to help at BUCS, the University Regatta, and then to the Junior Championships. We were promised a donation to club funds, although I might still need to chase that up! Thanks to those who went, and had a great day on the stakeboats and in the timing huts watching some exciting racing.

The year saw the refurbishment of City Challenge from the bar funds, so thanks to those who helped with the bar as this is a lovely addition to the recreational users boats. It has given her many more years of life, and is much enjoyed on our outings.

The purchase of shoes also made a great difference to many peoples' rowing, and was a very welcome improvement to many of the boats used by the senior men and women as well as juniors and the recreational rowers.

The recreational rowers have of course been active throughout the year, with members going to Lithuania and Ireland as well as the Lakes and visits closer to home. A particular success was a visit to Burton resulting in a proposed race at their regatta for the respective recreational rowers. Although the regatta was cancelled, the race went ahead in 8's over a very short course. We won by a bow ball and look forward to a repeat next year!

A taster day for parents was another success with 31 rowers out on the water and juniors enthusiastically supporting the event. We now have recruited parents to row with us in our ever expanding rowing squad and look forward to their joining us for visits and events over the coming year.

A special thanks to Louise Johnson for her fund raising – her pogies and neckwarmers have earned the club over £300, and we look forward to her return before too long.

Finally I must join the thanks to Rob for his outstanding contribution to the club. I was on his inaugural Learn 2 Row course. I missed most of the sessions so was put to coxing – my first outing was one dark evening in January with a beginners crew and Rob. His instructions were short and easy to understand – “Do what I tell you and don't hit the stone bridge”. I didn't realise at the time that was the club motto...

It is lovely to see him now so happy with his little family, and we need to continue his legacy of enthusiasm and commitment to bringing more people into the club and rowing, making lifelong friends and in particular enjoying a challenging and rewarding sport.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Michelle Dempsey and seconded by Ron Hanson and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

Vote of thanks Liz Pulford and seconded by Kim Clark.

(iii) SOCIAL CHAIR'S REPORT

Bar Chair Report

It's been a very good year on the bar with us hosting 12 events, the maximum our license allows. We took £10,748 over the bar which when included with the £2,710 room hire fees and accounting for purchases makes a total of £8,669 profit. When you consider in 2017 we made just £756 profit on the bar it shows that the hard work it takes to organise and put on functions is worth it to the club accounts. A big thank you to those who have regularly helped on the bar especially Michelle, Joanne, Alex, Grace, Nicola and Ben. As decided by the club committee 50% of bar profits go towards a defined fund-raising project which this past year has seen the respray of City Challenge and we are 90% towards the next project which is a refurb of David Ladds and Harry Wykes. Future projects are decided by the club committee but any suggestions for from club members are very welcome.

Finally, I will just ask if anyone can tell me what the number one thing people say to me when they attend a function at our club? "I didn't even know that Leicester had a rowing club". The past 12 functions have resulted in over 1,000 new people coming to our club, being made very welcome by our bar staff and hopefully spreading the word about our Leicester Rowing Club. So whilst running the bar is good for the club accounts it's also good for the club in a much wider sense and I look forward to next year being as successful as the last.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Sue Shaw and seconded by Angela Holohan and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

Vote of thanks proposed by and seconded by

(iv) CLUB SAFETY AUDIT AND SAFETY REPORT Presented by Sally Horrocks

Thank you to everybody for working together to keep everyone safe. Everyone is prepared to learn and we have a lot of reports because we do things well. Worst incident was a cyclist hitting Anne. Worst in BR a cyclist hitting a lamp post. Don't wait for someone else to speak up, do say if gates undone, cox not wearing a life jacket.

Had a positive meeting with the Universities and looking forward to coordinating activities with them, Really positive experience. Did night rowing briefing with juniors, and impressed with their attitudes to safety.

Make use of training packages on BR website which are really well worth doing.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Howard Marsh and seconded by Malcolm Neal and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

(v) JUNIOR REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Presented by Freya Talbot

Throughout this last year of being junior rep we have had some successes and other learning curves. Firstly I'm extremely happy with how many new members that have joined this past year. This was made possible mainly by the junior learn to row week in Summer. I have watched them all turn into amazing athletes which I hope one day they will go on to win many races. The rowing week gave our existing juniors a chance to learn also as they had to figure out how to teach and demonstrate the correct technique. I think that this also helped them to grow as individual athletes and improve their confidence and knowledge about rowing. Being junior rep means a lot to me as I am really passionate about rowing and therefore am extremely keen to help others learn about this sport.

From this we have attended races throughout the year such as Ancholme, Nottingham, Peterborough and Northampton. Our first race of the year at Northampton we had first wins from Autumn, Blythe and Kathryn. We also had first wins from Sam and Teddy at Lincoln. Despite the awful weather, we had first wins from Fait and Blythe in their singles. As well as having many first wins for individuals during this year, we still had a lot of other wins from across different events. From watching and participating in these races with them, I have seen so much improvement with the outcomes but also with how they prepare and go about racing. There were many races that brought them and us confidence with how our juniors were performing and improving with time. A massive congratulations to Lauren on all of her achievements throughout this year including GB Trials, GB Junior Small Boats Regatta, Munich, National Schools Regatta and Henley Women's Regatta as well as all of the other races she's competed in. I also want to say good luck and well done to James and Blythe for their achievements this year and transferring over to Performance Squad. We wish you all the best.

Many of our juniors came along to the Annual dinner this year and really enjoyed the evening. I thought this was a really great way of bringing everyone together as we are coming to the end of this year. I think we were all quite shocked with how different everyone looked in something other than sports clothes. Thank you to all of the parents not only for being so supportive to all the juniors but also for their help with the kitchen, regatta, fund raising, football car parks, clean ups, bar duty and preparation and helping out at races. A big thank you to all of the coaches this year for their continuous support. On the half of the juniors I would like to say a massive thank you to Rob for all of his hard work and commitment over these last years. We will all miss you as captain and we wish you the best of luck for you and your family! The juniors are looking forward to another great year of training hard and racing. I have really enjoyed being junior rep this year and I hope that you will consider me to be re-elected again for this next year. I have found it a very rewarding and exciting experience and although stressful at times, I hope that I have shown my commitment not only to the juniors but to the club as a whole. I know I have not done as much this year because of exams and moving to college however, I will try my best to improve and work with the juniors for the coming year 2020.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Graham Wright and seconded by Hazel Ward and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT AND PRESENTATION OF ACCOUNTS

Presented by Nicola Henry

Thank John Wilson for checking the figures to make sure they were good for the AGM and appreciated his help and support.

Purchased nearly £20,000 of boats. Thanks to Rob made an additional £6000 profit on previous years. Coaching costs were higher this year because a bursary was awarded to Lauren which has helped with the costs of the training camps and going to competitions abroad, so thank you.

A big expense is the kitchen and committee room refurb which is now largely done apart from some electrical work.

Car parks show a small decrease mainly because there weren't so many football matches this year, and also the club did not offer 3 car parks but they remain a very valuable source of income to the club.

Sue Shaw asked about the cost of the gates which is shown in assets. Riverside paid £4500 towards the cost, but there is an ongoing issue. Met Riverside and showed them the CCTV footage about the damage and then met with the contractor to discuss the remedy and estimate for repair which has gone to Riverside. Now waiting for Riverside's response, and will chase them to get that sorted. Important we do keep the grounds secure so they do need to be repaired.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Malcolm Neal and seconded by Freya Talbot and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Treasurer proposed that subscriptions remain at the current rates seconded by Ben Pickering and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. TRUSTEES

It was AGREED to appoint the following as Trustees: Sue Shaw, Peter Julian, Tim Walton and Simon Whittaker.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The following nominations had been received and were approved:

	Position	Name of nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
1	President	Liz Pulford	Howard Marsh	Tim Walton
2	Captain	Ben Pickering	Rob Fox	Howard Marsh
3	Vice Captain Women	Alex Wellings	Hazel Ward	Rob Fox
4	Vice Captain Men	Hazel Ward	Emma Crouch	Lauren Henry
5	Secretary	Anne Hock	Kim Clark	Angela Holohan
6	Treasurer	Nicola Henry	Liz Pulford	Graham Clark
7	Junior Co-ordinator	Graham Wright	Kim Clark	Anne Hock
8	Junior Rep	Freya Talbot/Autumn Bates	Emma Crouch	Katarzyna Kmiecik
9	Member	Kim Clark	Graham Clark	Anne Hock
10	Member	Graham Clark	Graham Wright	Paul Andrew
11	Member	Sophie Connolly	Angela Holohan	Blythe Lyons
12	Member	Caroline Haracz	Kim Clark	Anne Hock
13	Member	Rob Fox	Tim Walton	Ben Pickering
14	Member	Howard Marsh	Liz Pulford	Tim Walton
15	Member	Paul McGrillis	Caroline Haracz	Anne Hock
16	Member	Tim Walton	Rob Fox	Howard Marsh
17	Member	Clare Wildin	Caroline Haracz	Kim Clark

Agreed by a show of hands to accept all 17 nominations.

Members recommended we change the rules to a minimum number or suitable alternative and that change will be put to the AGM in 2020.

Post meeting it was noted that the constitution had already been changed in 2018:

6 (iii). Club Committee

If there are more nominations received than vacancies for the Committee, including Officers, the AGM may decide by a show of hands to increase the number of the Committee members up to a maximum of 20 members including Officers.

7. ELECTION OF SOCIAL COMMITTEE

No nominations had been received for the Social Committee and it was agreed to refer this to the Committee for appropriate action.

8. ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENTS

The following were proposed by, seconded by and UNANIMOUSLY elected as Vice Presidents:
The Lord Mayor of Leicester, Mr John Nicholls, Mr Martin Jones-Gerrard, Mr Mike Holman, Mr Rodger Smart, Mrs Sue Shaw, Mr Tim Walton, Ms Liz Pulford, Mr Howard Marsh, Mr Mike Watson, Mrs Jose Mills, Mr Paul Shaw, Mr John Wilson and Mr Malcolm Neal.

A new Vice Presidents was proposed, Rob Fox

Proposed by Liz Pulford
Seconded by Anne Hock

The election of Vice Presidents was proposed by Liz Pulford and seconded by Anne Hock and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. LIFE MEMBERS

Life members were noted as Mr Tom Haslam-Jones, Simon Whitaker, Tony Green, Nigel Ramsden, Jonathan Walton.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sally is scanning a lot of material about the history of the club and if anyone has anything to add, please get in touch with her to add to the archive.

Michelle asked about future funding, and asked about blades in particular that have become an issue. Liz Pulford and Howard Marsh went through all the blades, and found 2 sets not being used but are functional and available, and also 2 pairs which need to be re-pitched but have not found anyone to do that. Also now looking at buying new blades. RF said it came up at last RoFo, but realised cross over between squads means they are not always available. Michelle said no need to be anxious, just get some more blades. Recognise it is an issue. Both juniors and rec squads have grown and now have a session where a lot of equipment is required.

Graham W continue to get applications for juniors, so now need more help on the bank from looking after complete beginners to the more experienced crews. LP said to pass message round about more supervision and coaching on the bank. AH advised about the Level 2 course in the Spring and encouraged members to do it.

Ron Hanson asked about the landing stage and asked about extending the hard standing to keep it clean and safe in the high water. LP thought we need to get the whole edge made good with a run off on the standing so that drainage can be improved.

Jean McNeil asked about the cox boxes and the lack of working ones. They are so expensive and they get trashed so easily, so need to keep them in good order and safe so that they can be properly looked after. It's proposed to keep them in one of the cupboards. Michelle suggested signing them out. We need to work on a better system to manage them and make crews take responsibility for them. Jose pointed out it can be the wiring in the boat and a session was offered to check how to do this. Michelle suggested a session on how to look after the boxes and wiring.

Rob thanked everyone for all the thank yous. He will continue with the website, but will hand over Captain's email address to Ben. So the emails to members will come from a different address.

After thanks from the President for attendance, the meeting closed at 9.17pm.